

NEWS FROM NETHERTON

Victory for parent power!

IN SPITE OF A COMPLETE lack of interest from John Maxton MP and in spite of open hostility from Councillor Eddie Devine, a great victory was won for people power and common sense with the successful outcome in the "Save Netherton Primary School" campaign. As the news broke parents made their way to the school and before long the champagne corks were popping. Make no bones about it, this was a great victory for a community which already suffers low morale because of total lack of amenities in the area.

In the words of some of the parents "This is only the beginning of our struggle to reclaim our community." Already plans are being made to elect a school board, a parents association and a community council. Links with other schools and centres under threat of closure will still be maintained.

Our congratulations go out to the campaigning groups of all the schools saved. To those whose schools are still under threat we have not forgotten you — *your struggle is our struggle.*



**Dont miss the public meeting:
see back page!**

Lame Excuses

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Firstly the building is a sound structure and will be for many years to come. It would have been the economics of the madhouse to demolish it. The local housing association had expressed an interest in using the school for office space. Church groups, scouts, guides and other local groups had also let it be known that they would be using the school's facilities. Income therefore would have derived from the constant school let fees.

The argument regarding the size of the school roll call was also nonsense. It is a known fact that the smaller the pupil/teacher ratio the better the academic achievement. The ratio at Netherton is one teacher to nineteen pupils. Most educationalists state that the perfect ratio is one teacher to twenty pupils. There was also a prediction for a growth in the population for this area. The growth in population means new pupils. I am sure that the

parents of these pupils would have shared the worry and anxieties of the present parents if they had been forced to send their children to schools more than a mile away over a busy main road.

No Devine Right

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Surely you're not that kind of fool.
We vote for you to cast our vote,
Then you shove it down our throat.
Well "Eddie Boy" you vote for closure,
We will sit in and keep our composure.
Now and then we get uptight.
So you! Devine just get it right.
Food, blankets and beds to spare,
Parents against closure, we will be there.
Don't dare you think we'll go away,
We know our rights, give us our say.
The parents from Netherton here to stay,
United we stand, the parents' way.*

James "Hammy" Hamilton

Didn't they do well!

As a result of the dedication and determination of the Netherton parents' campaign to save the school, the staff of Netherton Primary are thrilled and delighted to continue to provide for their children's education.

Words cannot express the staff's appreciation of all the effort that went into the saving of Netherton. They know the value that Netherton's parents place on their children's education.

The involvement of the wider community, in particular the Rev. Robert Anderson of Carmunnock Parish Church, has heartened everyone in the school.

This is a very emotional time for us all at Netherton, and we pledge our commitment to all parents and children whose future lies at Netherton Primary School.

Mary D. Newell
Head Teacher

Jeely Piece Club Play It Safe Team

There are two reasons why the Jeely Piece Club supports the Netherton Save Our School Campaign.

1) Safety is a community concern for everybody, and the children from Netherton Primary now have to negotiate a busy Duel Carriageway if the proposed plans go ahead to amalgamate Netherton Primary with Castleton Primary.

2) If the school closes, the only community facility in the Holmyre area will be lost, stopping other community groups, like ourselves, providing indoor activities in the winter for children which are much needed in the area.

The Play It Safe Team is starting streetwork in the Holmyre area on Thursdays 3.30 to 5.30 up until 20 th June. All parents are welcome to bring their children and any help they can offer would be appreciated.

So come along and join in the fun which includes skipping, uni hoc, football, stilts, and rollerblades.

Every one at the Jeely offers their support for the Netherton Campagners

Rita's Fund Raising Team

Friday 26th April

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This money will go towards our bus excursions to places like the City Chambers and the EIS Demo at Glasgow Green. We would like to thank one and all who involved themselves in helping us with our goal to save schools from closure.

Wednesday 1st May

A delegation of four parents and our minister Robert Anderson left for the City Chambers to discuss the proposals for saving Netherton Primary. On arriving we were informed that only the four parents were allowed in and they refused to let the minister attend the meeting.

When we were taken up to meet Malcolm Green and Ian McDonald we voiced our disappointment that our minister was not to be allowed in with us. Mr Green immediately summoned the minister to join us.

We talked at length about our proposal to keep Netherton open and put forward many original ideas and some serious ones, pointing out Netherton is a tiny community on its own with two facilities left: one excellent school and one post box.

We pointed out that we are so cut off from Castlemilk most of the time that we feel as though we are on another planet. We requested that Mr Green consider coming out to our small area to see for himself that we need our school to be left as the focal point of our community. Before leaving the meeting Mr Green agreed to come and visit our school and area the next morning.

On doing this Mr Green seemed quite concerned about our lack of amenities but most of all we believe he was very impressed by our school and its ambience. We, the people of Netherton, are a large family and want to remain that way.

The Guilty Party

Already our Labour councillors are taking credit for saving Netherton from closure. Their sheer gall and hypocrisy is mind-boggling. Members of "Action for Netherton", the campaign group which was set up to save Netherton Primary, know the real truth.

The real truth is that Netherton Primary School was only saved from closure by the determined struggle of a group of parents, children and supporters. This was achieved *despite* the inaction of our so-called representatives.

The fight to save Netherton meant a lot of hard work and long hours. The school has been occupied (to date) for 48 days. The parents involved in the occupation operated a gruelling shift system which took a lot of spirit to keep going. Families and relationships were put under a lot of strain as people played their

part in the fight.

Everyone put in time, energy and money (plus a lot of the old blood, sweat and tears!) to the campaign which had become our lives for the last two months. This cost can never be reclaimed or repaid. The uncertainty and distress caused to parents and children cannot be wiped away.

All this need never have happened, if our spineless so-called representatives had stood up for our interests, a whole community need never have been put through this agony. We have a message to the people we only see at election time: **WE WILL NOT FORGET YOUR BETRAYAL!**

We will do our best to let the whole of Castlemilk and for that matter, the whole of Glasgow, know of your role in this affair. **WE WILL REMEMBER!**

**KNOW
YOUR
ENEMY!**



Eddie Devine



Pat Lally



Christine Devine

Who we are

We are a group of parents and supporters who have campaigned to prevent the closure of Netherton Primary. The school is the last local amenity and its closure would have been a disaster for the area's population which has already suffered from low morale.

This group will remain intact. Together we hope to build a better future for the people of Holmbyre and surrounding areas.

Thanks Bob!

Action for Netherton would like to thank Rev Bob Anderson of Carmunnock Parish Church for all his hard work and unstinting loyalty to all the people who were involved in the Save Netherton Campaign.

Visits

Action for Netherton has had a few phone calls from other schools who are on the list of closures. One of these schools was Greenfields Primary in Govan. We went along to pay a visit to the parents who are doing a sit-in in the school to give them some moral support. This was very welcome.

We have also been to Kinning Park Resource Centre. The users at the Centre have no heating or electricity except when the watchmen who are guarding the premises make their tea. The Centre has been officially closed since May 3rd.

Castleton Primary

The greatest gift we could give our children is a good education. We oppose the closure of any school. To close one school at the expense of another serves no useful purpose. We wholeheartedly support the redevelopment of Castleton Primary School. There is a prediction of a growth of population for the area and both Netherton Primary and Castleton will be needed to supply their education needs.

Demos

At the beginning of April the parents and friends of Netherton have been to protest at the closure of our school.

The protest was in the City Chambers. Our local Labour councillor Mr Edward Devine was asked why he broke his promise to the people who asked him to support the sit-in at Netherton School, which began on Thursday 28th March.

Mr Devine said he would be there with us and he would join in our effort to save our school, but he has let us down yet again.

Since then we have been to protest at the Glasgow Museum of Modern Art, and to another peaceful demonstration at the City Chambers.

The Labour councillors have spent over £3.5 million of taxpayers' hard-earned money on the new gallery. So what comes first? Education and community spirit for all, or art for a few?

The new Lord Provost of Glasgow, Mr Pat Lally, was asked recently at the Fringe Gallery in the Braes Shopping Centre, Castlemilk by angry parents and kids what his position was on the school closures.

His reply was "I am saving seventy-two teachers' jobs", yet he has been given a new car and driver, which costs thousands of pounds per year, to go to his local shop to collect his morning paper.

Enroll your children

For the moment it looks as if Netherton Primary is secure but we cannot be complacent. With each review of the education budget victims for closure will be sought. The "Action for Netherton" campaign is really just beginning. Links will be built between parents, teachers & housing associations. The relationship between the pupils and teachers is excellent and we have a fine building.

I would encourage parents who stay in Holmbyre and surrounding areas that if you have children approaching school age then enroll them at Netherton. By doing so you will be giving your child the finest start possible educationally.

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